CONSUMPTION AND CONSUMERS IN THE PRESENT ECONOMIC CONTEXT

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Abstract
Due to the multiple interdependences emerged from the coalescence among consumer behaviour, economic and human behaviour, the vast interest in the study of consumer behaviour has led to important developments, the field being permanently enriched with new contributions. Nowadays consumer behaviour is interpreted not solely through the act of buying, but also as far as its impact on our lives, on the way we perceive our own image and ultimately on our state of being is concerned. At present, the world economy is affected by the global crisis which has left its mark on the lives of consumers almost in all markets of the world. The obvious effects and their constant mediatisation emphasize the impact of the crisis and add to the already installed state of uncertainty. The current context shaped by the economic crisis is remodelling mentalities and re-lays the foundation for a new conceptual model of determinants of consumer behaviour, thus favouring the advent of a new type of consumer – more conscious, more rational and more attentive. However, bearing in mind that these new consumers were forced to emerge due to an unfavourable economic context, there rises the question whether the new consumers, given the opportunity by the improvement of the economic conditions, would go back to their past habits, or is this a lasting change in their behaviour? This paper is aimed therefore at presenting the current frame of consumer behaviour manifestation and the main influences considered to have an impact on consumer behaviour during the historical development of the field, at describing several tendencies in consumer behaviour determined by the present context and offer a perspective on whether these changes and transformations in consumer behaviour moulded by the present economic and social context are lasting or are merely the transient effects of a malevolent conjuncture.

Key words
consumer behaviour, economic crisis, impact, new consumer

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